



MINUTES

March 23 2022

SECOND MONTHLY MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL CITY OPERATIONS CENTER | 305 WILLIAMS ST. | 4:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor Barbara G. Volk and Council Members: Mayor Pro Tem Lyndsey Simpson, Dr. Jennifer Hensley, Debbie O'Neal-Roundtree, and Jerry A. Smith Jr., J.D.

Staff Present: City Manager John F. Connet, Assistant City Manager Brian Pahle, City Attorney Angela Becker, City Clerk Angela Reece, Communications Manager Allison Justus, and others

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Volk called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and welcomed those in attendance. A quorum was established with all members in attendance.

2. PRESENTATIONS

A. **Parking Fees and Permit Rates Presentation** – *Brian Pahle, Assistant City Manager*

Downtown Manager Jamie Carpenter provided a brief history of the parking deck project, reviewed the Walker Consultants project analysis and presented recommended parking rates and fees to Council. Ms. Carpenter encouraged the public to visit the City's website to view additional information on the project. Ms. Carpenter advised numerous advisory committees met and discussed four topics consisting of the need for downtown business employee permits, feasibility of monthly permit rate for downtown business employees, the need for space reservations, and daily and hourly rates. Assistant City Manager Brian Pahle discussed the following staff recommendations which encompassed feedback from the Economic Vitality Team subcommittee, Walker Consultants, and other downtown merchants.

Meter/Hourly Parking

\$2.00 per Hour; Main St. & Avenues First ½ Hour Free (3-Hour Max)

\$1.50 per Hour; Surface Lots & Deck First 1 Hour Free (5-Hour/ up to \$10.00 Max)

Monthly Permits

\$25 = Top Floor + Dogwood

\$60 = 24/7 Surface Lots (ex. Apple Lot)

\$80 = Deck Permit (any floor)

*No 24/7 Reserved Single Space (\$120 if implemented)

Enforcement: Mon. – Sat. 9am – 7pm

Council Member Jerry A. Smith Jr., J.D. provided a letter and petition submitted by Mark Pavao and local business owners in support of having the first half hour of parking available at no cost. Council Member Smith inquired regarding transfer of parking permits and staff stated the permit would be issued to the registration of the vehicle/owner.

Council Member Lyndsey Simpson expressed support for prepaid parking permits for Henderson County residents. Assistant Manager Brian Pahle stated if this is a Council priority then staff would recommend exploring the option through the Park Mobile Application to include the use of promotion codes. City Manager John Connet discussed the need to become more efficient while generating revenues to pay for the parking garage. He also discussed the need for enforcement technology to ensure the city has the tools necessary to enforce the first 30-minutes of free parking. Council Member Dr. Jennifer Hensley expressed concerns regarding abuse of the free time and Ms. Carpenter clarified that patrons would still be required to use the meter to park and said after the first 30 minutes it will begin charging. Ms. Carpenter further clarified that persons who do not use the meter would receive a

parking violation. Manager Connet stated the meter reading technology will also assist in other areas of town with enforcement. Council Member Debbie O'Neal-Roundtree stated she has spoken with many people who expressed concerns over implementation of parking fees. Council Member Jerry A. Smith Jr., J.D. clarified the parking lots one block off of Main Street will remain free. Council Member Lyndsey Simpson asked for consideration for further reducing downtown merchant employee parking fees and also asked staff to study lighting and safety in the free parking areas. Assistant Manager Brian Pahle stated charging sufficient rates will allow investment and improvements in other parking areas in town such as additional lighting and safety measures. He further clarified any Council approved rates would be included in the fee schedule which would be presented to Council for adoption mid-year.

After much consideration City Council agreed the first thirty minutes will be free on Main Street, the first hour will be free for the parking deck and surface lots. Council agreed to eliminate permanent reserved spots except those that are contractually obligated through the purchase of land through the new parking deck project. Council further agreed to direct staff to utilize the Park Mobile software to explore residential parking discounts.

B. ARP Funding Presentation – Administrative Staff

City Manager John Connet reminded everyone the City Council's vision is to use ARP dollars to fund eligible transformative projects that address difficult community needs and recalled Council's request to hear from the community before selection of specific projects to fund to assist with determining priorities. City Manager John Connet discussed the allowable uses for American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding and interim rule changes stating requests of the City must address one or more of the following: COVID-19 public health needs; used for investment in water and sewer infrastructure; or used to address negative economic impacts. Manager Connet discussed the timeline and reminded everyone funding must be appropriated by December 2024 and expended by December 2026.

City Manager John Connet discussed public outreach efforts through surveys, advertisements, newsletters, as well as participating in-person meetings and community group meetings during the early part of the year. Manager Connet stated there were 1,226 survey participants and discussed the top funding priorities identified such as addressing negative economic impacts related to COVID-19, investing in water and sewer infrastructure, and supporting public health expenditures related to COVID-19. Manager Connet provided the following recommendations according to the new interim rule to Council as follows:

Allocate \$2.5 million for:

- Salaries over two fiscal years (FY 22-23 and FY 23-24)
- High priority program/projects

Allocate \$2.0 million for 2-4 transformative community projects

- Economic Impacts (homelessness, food insecurity, affordable housing)
- Health Impacts (mental health and substance abuse) * limited authority
- Water and Sewer Infrastructure (focus on failing septic tanks; lead pipe replacement)

Budget Manager Adam Murr clarified the City has received 34 requests for funding by nonprofits during the initial process.

Council Member Dr. Jennifer Hensley recalled maps of failing septic systems and asked if there is a plan to meet the needs of the failed systems. City Manager John Connet said the largest area is on the south end of town but clarified many are on the parameter of the City and said topography is a challenge.

Council Member Jerry A. Smith Jr., J.D. inquired regarding requiring annexation for sewer service extension if the extension is funded by ARP funds. Attorney Angela Beeker clarified the two would not be related but said annexation would have to be voluntary according to statute and the City's extension policy.

After much discussion the consensus of City Council was to fund requests utilizing the three categories as identified by citizens and recommended by City Manager Connet and to continue to seek further guidance as the process continues.

3. ADJOURN

Council Member Jerry A. Smith Jr., J.D. discussed a meeting date for the next budget workshop meeting and the consensus of Council was to hold the meeting on Friday April 29, 2022.

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 5:17 p.m. upon unanimous assent of the Council.

Barbara G. Volk, Mayor

ATTEST:

Angela L. Reece, City Clerk

DRAFT